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latter provinces, and the local public expenses in the former are the same as in the latter. In certain communes some imposts which fall upon special classes are heavier, and in others where these social classes hold the administrative power these forms of taxes scarcely exist, or do not exist at all.

Thiers has remarked that in 1789 wherever the communes enjoyed some liberty they soon fell into a condition of bankruptcy. Now the acts of 1888 and 1894 enlarged the power of the English local bodies, and the freedom given to these local bodies in the classic land of liberalism has produced communal socialism; that is, a prodigious development of public expense, and the administrative disorder which has doubled the public debt in a few years. In Italy, in spite of the fact that local liberty is restricted, the function of some local public bodies has increased extraordinarily, and the wealth which these local bodies demand from the citizens is increasing irregularly. It is strange that some wish to increase this liberty, when the experience of all countries shows that, far from securing a better administration, it reduces the municipality to distress, and extorts from its citizens enormous wealth which they ought to employ in satisfying their urgent needs. This wealth the local public bodies expend on public adornment more or less stupid, sacrificing it to the new "Goddess of Hygiene" and scarcely ever using it to satisfy any true social needs.<sup>1</sup>

Such, briefly, is the work of Municipal Socialism in Europe.

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#### CO-OPERATION BY FARMERS.

A TRAVELER passing through the southern part of Minnesota is impressed with the evidences of prosperity. Especially is this true when his manner of travel permits close observation and inquiry. He finds there farming communities engaged in the dairy business on a large scale, but the noticeable thing is the organization of this business on a co-operative basis.

A very good example of the results coming from this industry is seen in Steele county. This county is situated in the second tier of

<sup>1</sup>For example: The cities of London and Paris lack a sufficient water supply, as do also the great majority of European cities, especially those of Italy.

counties from the southern boundary, and the fourth from the eastern border. The soil is a sandy loam, well adapted to grazing purposes. The population numbers some 15,000, of which 40 per cent. is foreign, largely German and Danish. Nineteen creameries are engaged in the dairy business. All are co-operative concerns. The buildings and machinery of a dairy plant cost from \$3000 to \$4500. The money for the buildings and the purchase of the machinery is borrowed as a general thing. The board of directors in every case had provided a sinking fund by levying a tax of five cents on each hundred pounds of milk brought to the creamery. The debt incurred has been paid, in some instances, at an average rate of \$200 per month. The largest creameries have had receipts as high as \$45,000 in a single year. The average receipts of the creameries are about \$20,000 per year for each. This gives \$380,000 for distribution in Steele county from the dairy business. The net sum distributed is less than this. The expense of carrying on the business is about \$2400 for each creamery. Deducting the expenses of management there is left \$354,400 for distribution among the 1642 patrons of the creamery associations. This gives each member some \$215 for his share in the enterprise.

The creameries are governed by an organization very much like a joint stock company. The method of procedure is as follows: The farmers interested meet at a schoolhouse and appoint a committee to ascertain the number of cows in the vicinity. If there are found to be at least five hundred, and their owners are willing to pledge their milk to the creamery, an association is formed with a president, vice president, secretary, and board of directors. These are empowered to build the factory and start the business. Once a month the officers declare a dividend on the basis of the milk furnished by each patron.

The method of collecting the milk is also worthy of remark. The district contributing to the creamery is divided into routes. The farmers on the different routes take turns in hauling the milk to the creamery, so that a journey is made by each man about every seven or eight days.

The results from this industry are remarkable. In the first place, the cash payments for milk have freed the farmer from the system of store pay. He now receives cash for his produce and buys with the freedom that cash gives. In order to hold former customers the store-keeper finds it necessary to keep a larger stock and a better variety. A second result is noticeable in the home life of the farmer. The

work and drudgery of butter making is taken from the kitchen, and the women are relieved from a good deal of hard labor.

Certainly what has been said here indicates a growing prosperity through the medium of a co-operative industry. In this example there should be much to encourage the farmers in different parts of the country. There is no reason why the same principle may not be applied to other features of agricultural labor and enable the workers in it to reap richer rewards than they are now doing.

FRANK L. MCVEY.

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### TABLES RELATING TO THE PRICE OF WHEAT AND OTHER FARM PRODUCTS SINCE 1890.

THESE tables are a continuation of a series of tables printed as Appendix III in the JOURNAL for December 1892. The sources drawn on, as well as the method followed in the computation, are the same as for the earlier series. The figures for beef, pork, and lard have been compiled by Mr. William H. Allen, the remainder by Miss Katharine B. Davis. [Editor.]

TABLE I.  
PRODUCTION AND ACREAGE OF WHEAT.  
(,000 omitted).

Years	Wheat crop of the world	Wheat crop of Great Britain, France, Germany, Russia, Belgium, India, Australia, Argentina	Wheat crop of the United States	Acreage in
				United States
	Bushels	Bushels	Bushels	Acres
1890.....	.....	.....	399,262	36,087
1891.....	2,364,197	952,283	611,780	39,916
1892.....	2,481,805	1,196,264	515,949	38,554
1893.....	2,562,913	1,362,504	396,131	34,629
1894.....	2,676,651	1,421,033	460,267	34,882
1895.....	2,546,494	1,286,860	467,102	34,047
1896.....	2,430,497	1,216,081	427,684	34,618
1897.....	2,214,030	1,047,989	530,149	39,465